(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to prevent the epidemic?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal has reported that all Indian wheat varieties including PBW-343 are resistant to stem rust races prevalent in India due to Sr. 31 gene. However, this gene has been reported to have become susceptible to stem rust in Africa. UG-99 race is not present in India but the Directorate of Wheat Research has, nevertheless, initiated preemptive action to incorporate resistance to this race.

**Providing fertilizers and chemicals at reasonable rates**

1054. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to provide fertilizers and chemicals to poor farmers at reasonable rates;

(b) whether any specific policy has been laid down in consultation with State Governments; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) In order to make the fertilizer available at affordable rates to all categories of farmers, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of Urea is statutorily notified under Fertilizer Control Order, 1985 and MRP of the decontrolled phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers, such as Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MOP) and Nitrogenous Phosphatic Potassic (NPK) complexes are fixed under the Concession Scheme of P&K fertilizers except Single Super Phosphate (SSP) whose price is fixed by the State Governments. The MRPs of these fertilizers except SSP in some States has not been increased since last three years though their cost of production/import price has increased. There is no Government control on pricing of chemicals as the chemical industry has been deregulated.

**Training programme for farmers in Tamil Nadu**

1055. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any action plan for promotion, extension and upgradation of tranining programmes for farmers and soil testing facilities through National Chemical and Fertilizer Corporation or any other Government Corporation in the dry farming region of Tamil Nadu;